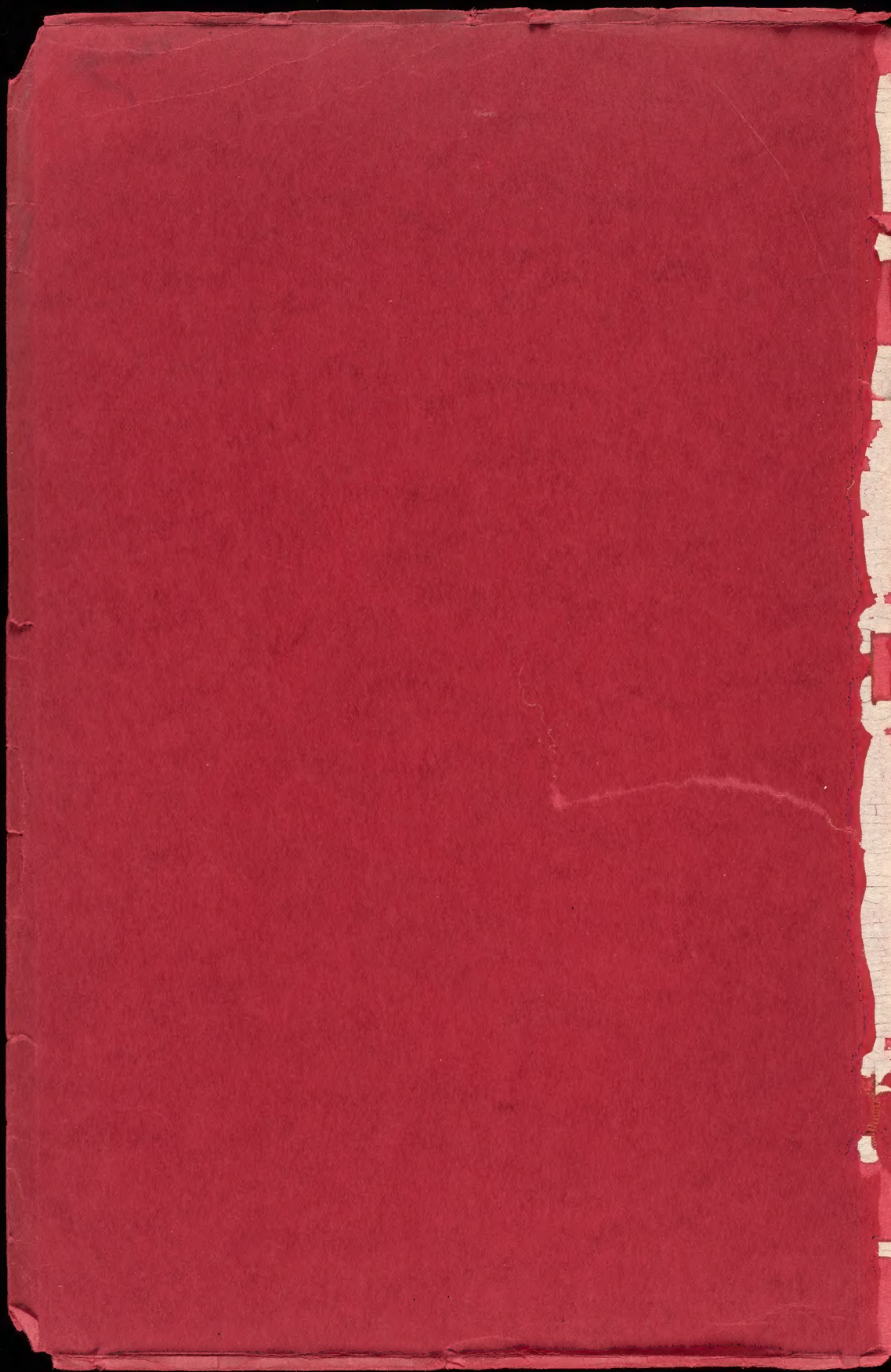




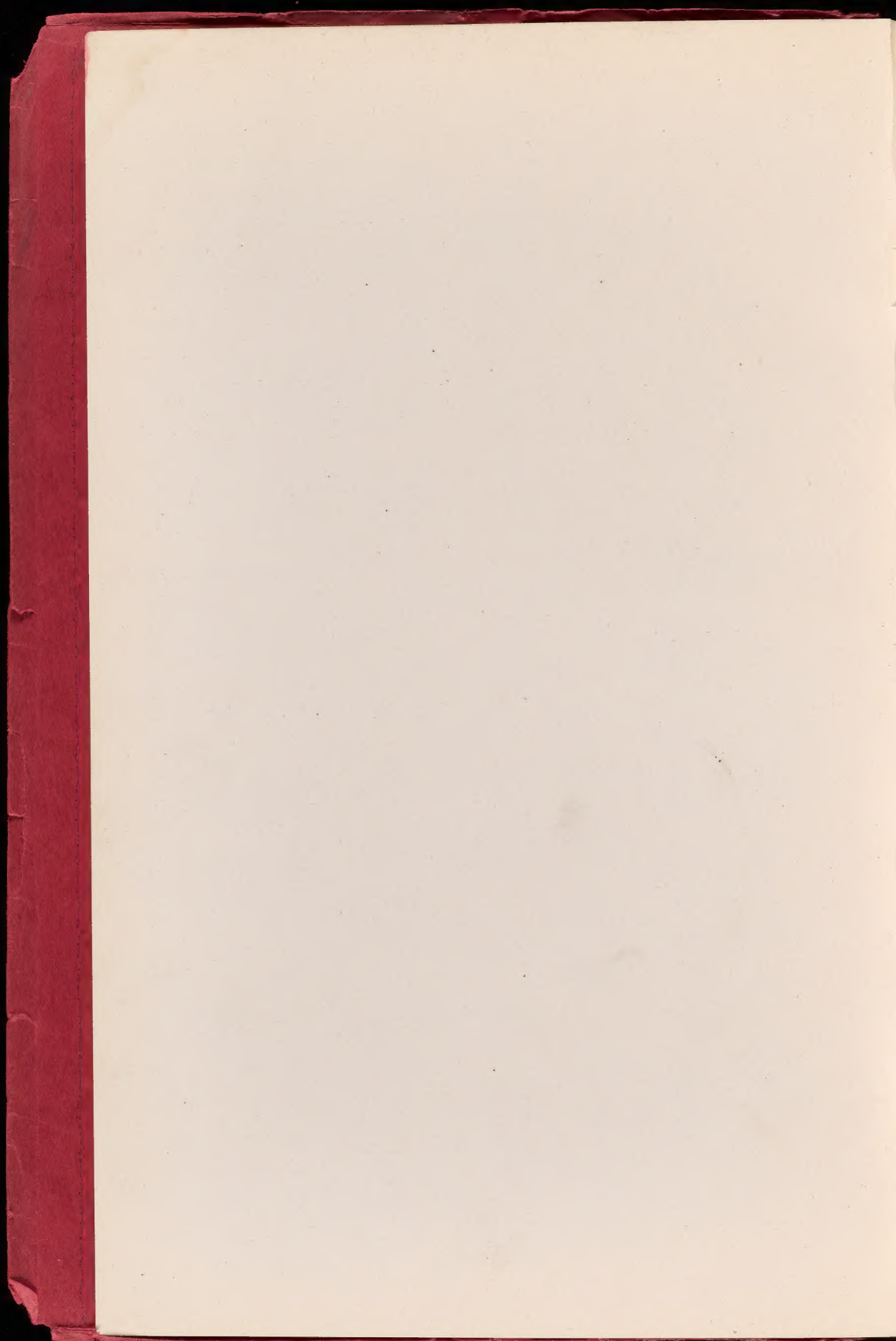
MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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Alma P. Le Duc.



MODERN RUSSIAN ART

By

LOUIS LOZOWICK

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Modern Russian Art

REVOLUTION SOCIAL AND ESTHETIC

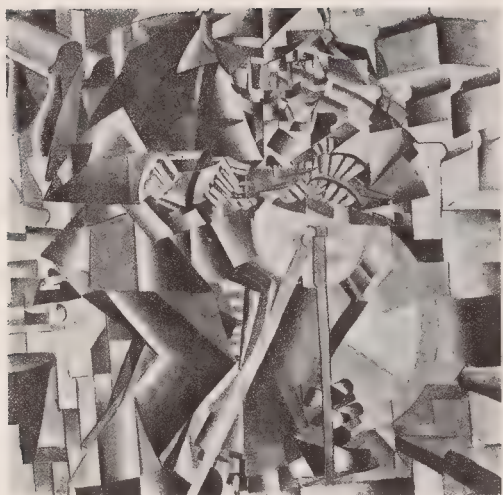
When the Soviets assumed power, they were intent upon a thorough house-cleaning and this, naturally, extended to the much-cluttered art corner. Looking about for aid they at once found obvious allies in the radical artists, the Futurists as they were all called. The alliance was quickly established before the conservative, recognized academicians had time to decide what orientation to take. The Futurists on their part were quick to discover an inherent affinity between themselves and the revolutionists: had they not also revolted against old accepted standards and been considered social outcasts? Theorists appeared on the scene to give articulate utterance to these ruminations. A new term, "Comfut" (Communism-Futurism), was even coined to denote the alliance. Aided by the machinery of the Soviets, these radicals inaugurated a tremendous program of reform. They abolished the hated Imperial Academy, organized a Free College of Artists in its place, opened new free art schools, transferred private art collections to the State and opened them to the public, established Museums of Modern Art (Museums of Artistic Culture), organized popular lectures, study circles, traveling exhibitions, issued new art publications, supported artists, bought their works, employed them in staging popular revolutionary festivals and in erecting revolutionary monuments—in a word, did everything to encourage the growth of art and bring it nearer to the masses.

As a result, artistic activity rose to unprecedented proportions. But the period is so brief and the schools are so various that it is a little difficult to trace precisely the threads connecting modern Russian art and the Revolution. There is, in the first place, an extreme preoccupation with social theory, an attempt to stress the obvious parallel between the political and artistic revolutions, to break with the past in order to create new art forms, just as the Soviets had broken with the past to create a new State; a desire to bring art nearer to life, to make art an integral part of it, to concentrate the constructive essence of the revolution in pictorial form that would have universal import and become eventually universal property.

This brings us to the second great preoccupation of modern Russian artists: art theory. In point of method modern Russian art is in revolt against the older Russian art and in particular against the didacticism of the "Wanderers" (*Peredvijniki*) and the estheticism of the "World of Art" (*Mir Iskusstva*). The "Wanderers"—Perov, Kramskoy, Gue, Vereshchagin, Repin—painted illustrated sermons intended to make evil men good, and good men better. It was art with a mission and a message. The members of the "World of Art"—Benois, Korovin, Golovin, Somov, Roerich, Bakst, Serov—admitted one message: Art for Art's sake, and one mission: Beauty. The modern Russian artists summarily reject the methods of both. Art has a social function, certainly, but this can best be exercised if the formal laws of art are observed. The ethical significance of art is in direct proportion to its esthetic quality. But it is, precisely, in this re-

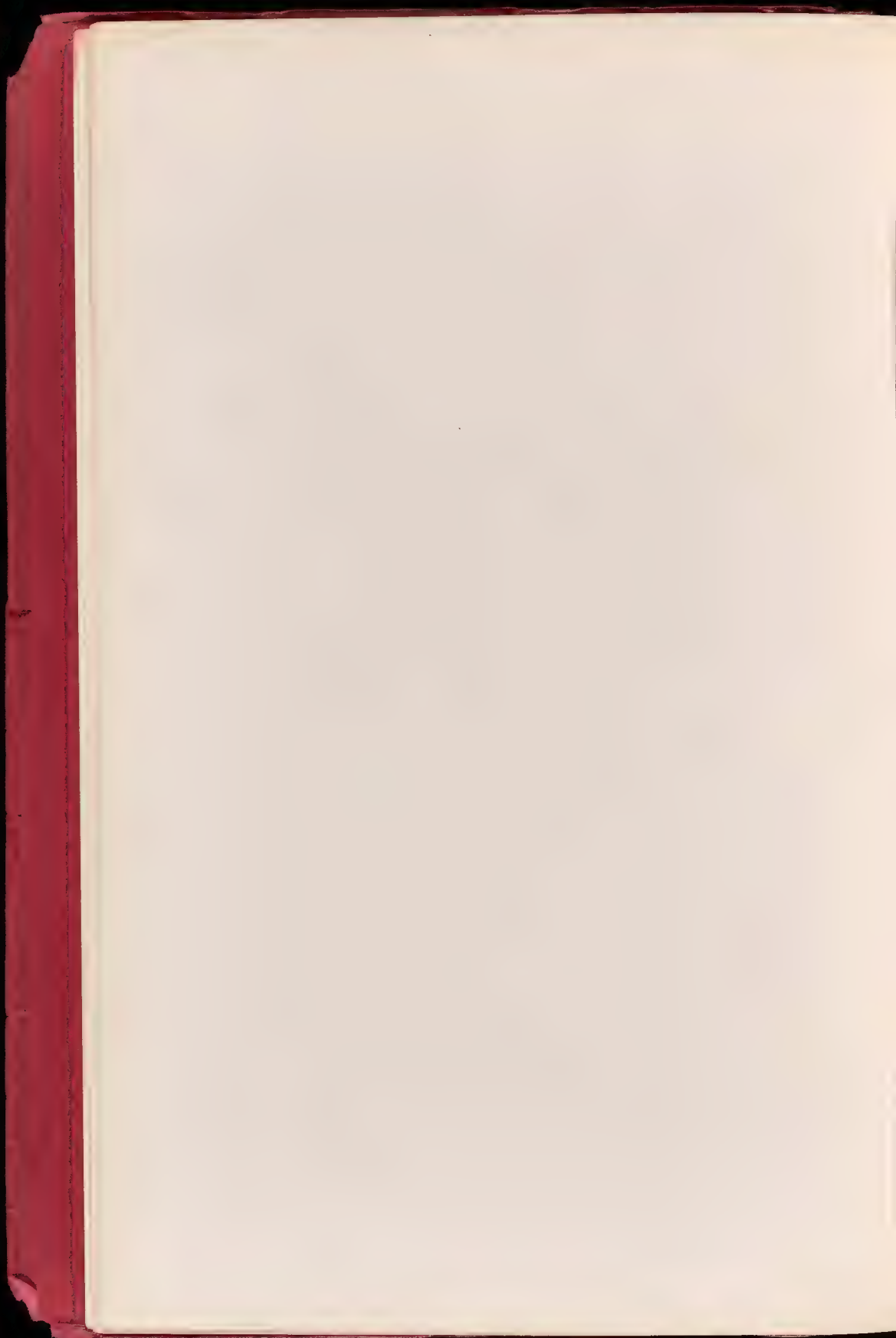


Falk



Malevitch

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spect that the older schools are found wanting. One makes disagreeable facts a little less attractive, the other makes agreeable facts a little more attractive. Both dilute life into anecdote and the method of procedure is in both cases very much the same, must of necessity be so, for the practice of both is based on imitation.

The modern Russian artists base their practice on creation. They, too, hold life paramount, but their attitude to it and their conception of it can be fully materialized only if the barrier between themselves and life is removed—if imitation as a method is abandoned. The modern Russian artists demand before all else mastery of technique, skill of workmanship, and devote themselves to a thorough-going study of the elements peculiar to each art: Color: its hue, shade, value and weight; Materials: their properties, texture and solidity; Masses and planes: their balance, relation, structure and stability; Space, volume, form.



THE FIRST MODERNS

Modern Russian art reached its greatest intensity and its greatest fertility during the Revolution. But its origins date far earlier; its rise was in fact contemporaneous with the rise of modern art elsewhere.

The reaction against the older schools began with the "Jack of Diamonds" (*Bubnovy Valet*, 1910), a school of Cezannists—Mashkov, Kontchalovsky, Rojdestvensky, Lentulov, Yakulov, Falk,—which tried to solve anew Cezanne's problems. The artists

did not seek, like the Impressionists, to fix a fleeting transient impression, but rather to record the stable and permanent. They employed natural form, but ordered the planes and balanced the masses of their pictures with a view to structural significance.

Contemporaneous with the efforts of the Cezannists to follow Western European precedent, were the counter efforts of the Primitives who, while differing in their methods and lacking organization, were alike in this: they all drew their inspiration from Russian archaic and folk art, ikons, popular prints, peasant painting, shop signs. In a smaller or larger measure one may trace this national influence in the work of such diverse artists as Larionov, Gontcharova, Burliuk, Chagall, Kandinsky, Grishchenko, Shevtchenko, Sternberg. Several of the Primitives (Larionov and Burliuk, among others) were also active members of "The Jack of Diamonds." In fact, many of them believed that to draw upon Primitive Russian sources was but another way of serving the cause of modern art, their assumption being that a deep-rooted affinity existed between the two in their common indifference to facts of nature, their conventionalization of type and perspective, tendency to abstraction, use of varied surface, etc.

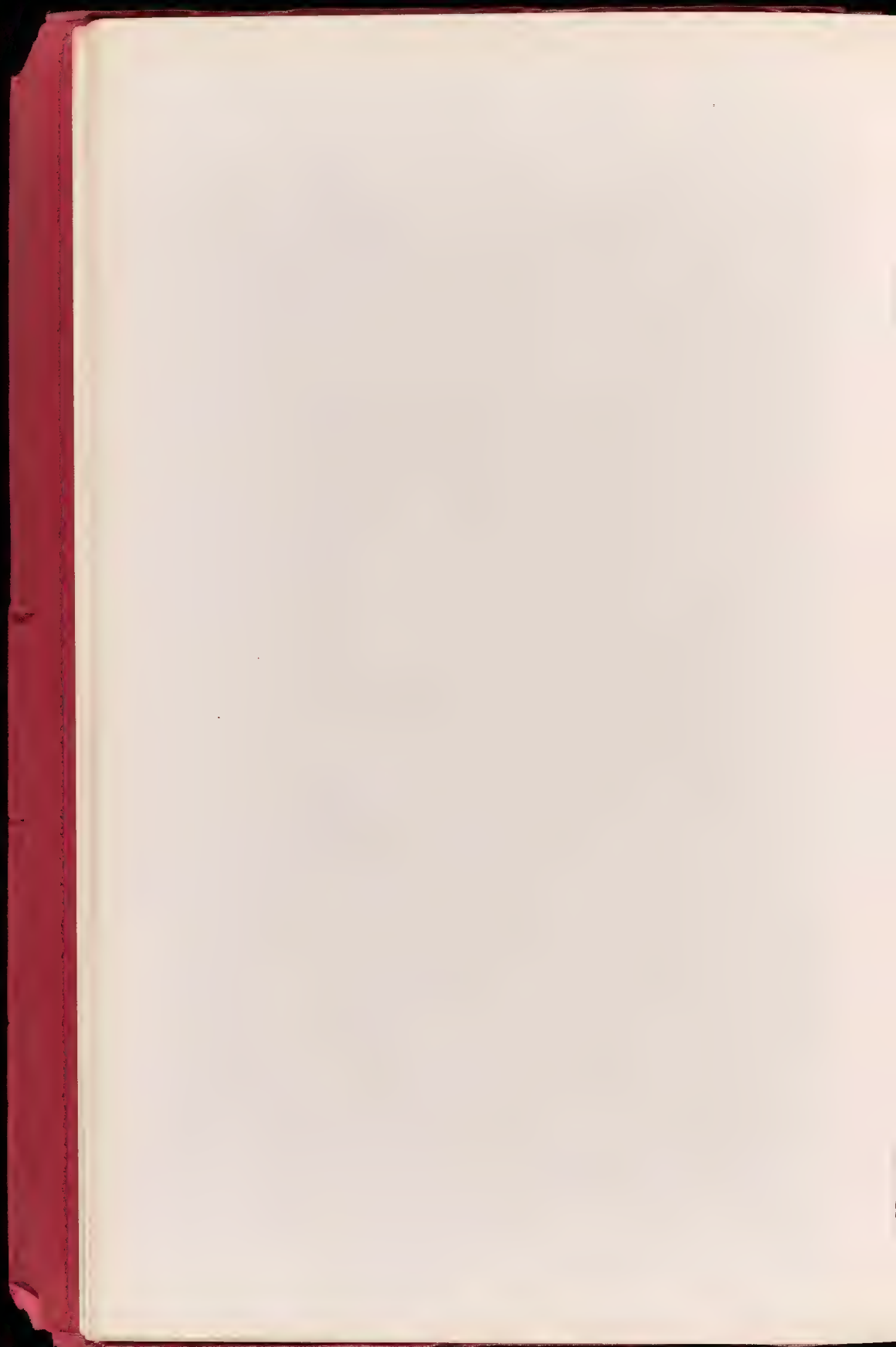
Larionov, who together with Gontcharova, came perhaps closest to the Russian Primitives, is also the author of "Rayonnism (*Lutchism*), a rather involved theory about the dispersion and combination of rays emanating from objects—a sort of Impressionism revised with reference to the lessons of Cubism and Futurism. Both artists did distinguished work in theatrical decoration.



Larionov



Gontcharova



THE CUBISTS

The Cubists—Morgunov, Exter, Udaltzova, Popova, Pevsner, Kliutzis, Puni—selected what they thought most essential in the art of Cezanne and went as far in the same direction as seemed to them logically inevitable. The Cezannists had already made some radical departures from the naturalist and impressionist methods of space composition in order to achieve a monumentality of design and stability of structure. The Cubists renounced linear and aerial perspective altogether and evolved the dissociation method of space composition. They went around natural objects and inside of them; as it were; showed them from multiple angles of vision by representing them simultaneously from the front, back and sides. The aim was, first, to combine the resultant segments, by the intersection and juxtaposition of planes, in such sequence that the spatial equivalent of the objects and their synthetic unity be recreated in the consciousness of the spectator; second, to select only such aspects of the objects and to weld them in such fashion as might elicit in the spectator an organic response to the plastic synthesis thus achieved.

To strengthen the effect of pictorial unity and expressiveness the method of varied texture was widely employed. Small and large brush strokes, transparent and opaque layers of color, mat and glossy shades were used to make a direct appeal to the sense of touch and thus to extend and enrich the esthetic experience. To stimulate still further the tactile sensibility in the spectator, painted imitation of surface was given up and actual materials of various physical

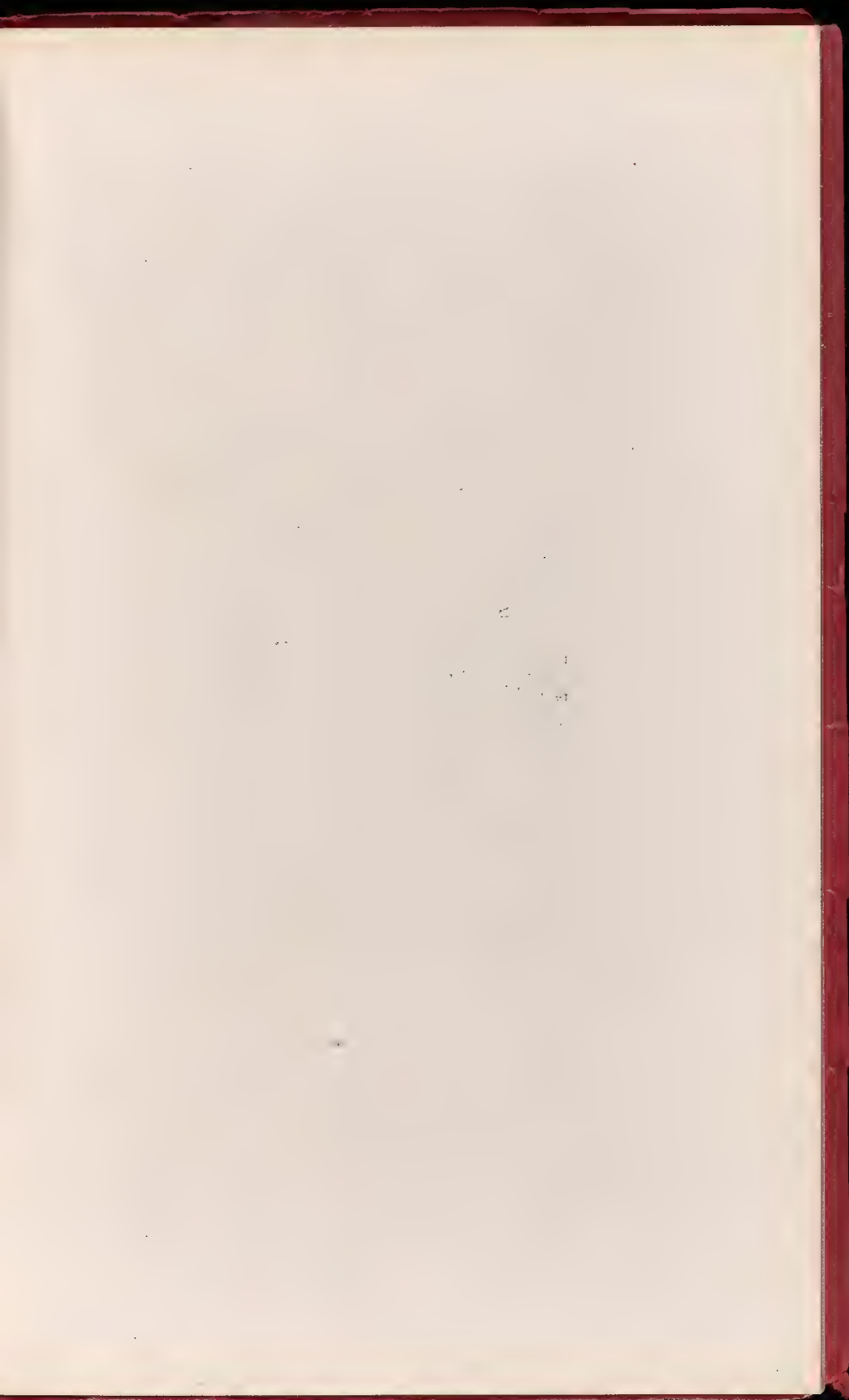
properties such as ebony, glass, paper, plaster, were incorporated into the body of the work.

This last method was developed on so wide a scale as almost to create a cult. No word is more common in the Russian art vocabulary than *factura*, the word that denotes this textural content and treatment of a surface, the corporeal quality of objects that affects and stimulates the tactile sense and imagination. A book has even been written ("Factura," by Markov) on the subject. The method reached its highest application in the Constructivist school.



THE SUPREMATISTS

The Suprematists—Malevitch, Rosanova, Exter, Rodtchenko, Drevin, Puni, Lissitzky—tried to get rid of what appeared chaotic in Cubism and carry its analytic process to the logical conclusion. While concrete reality was the Cubist's point of departure, his point of destination was the realm of purely pictorial abstraction. When Udaltzova paints "At the Piano" or Exter "Venice," we are still distinctly aware of natural objects studied in their spatial relationship. We can see parts of the piano, keys, notes, hands in the first picture; bridges, parts of houses in the second. Gradually, however, the Cubists are driven by the inner necessity of their evolution to concentrate on the pictorial effect at the expense of fidelity to natural fact. They sometimes reach the stage where recognizable objects entirely disappear, as in the works of Popova. With this disappears also our notion of volume and the picture is, finally, reduced to its own essence: a flat surface. It thus reaches the border line of Suprematism, for the aim



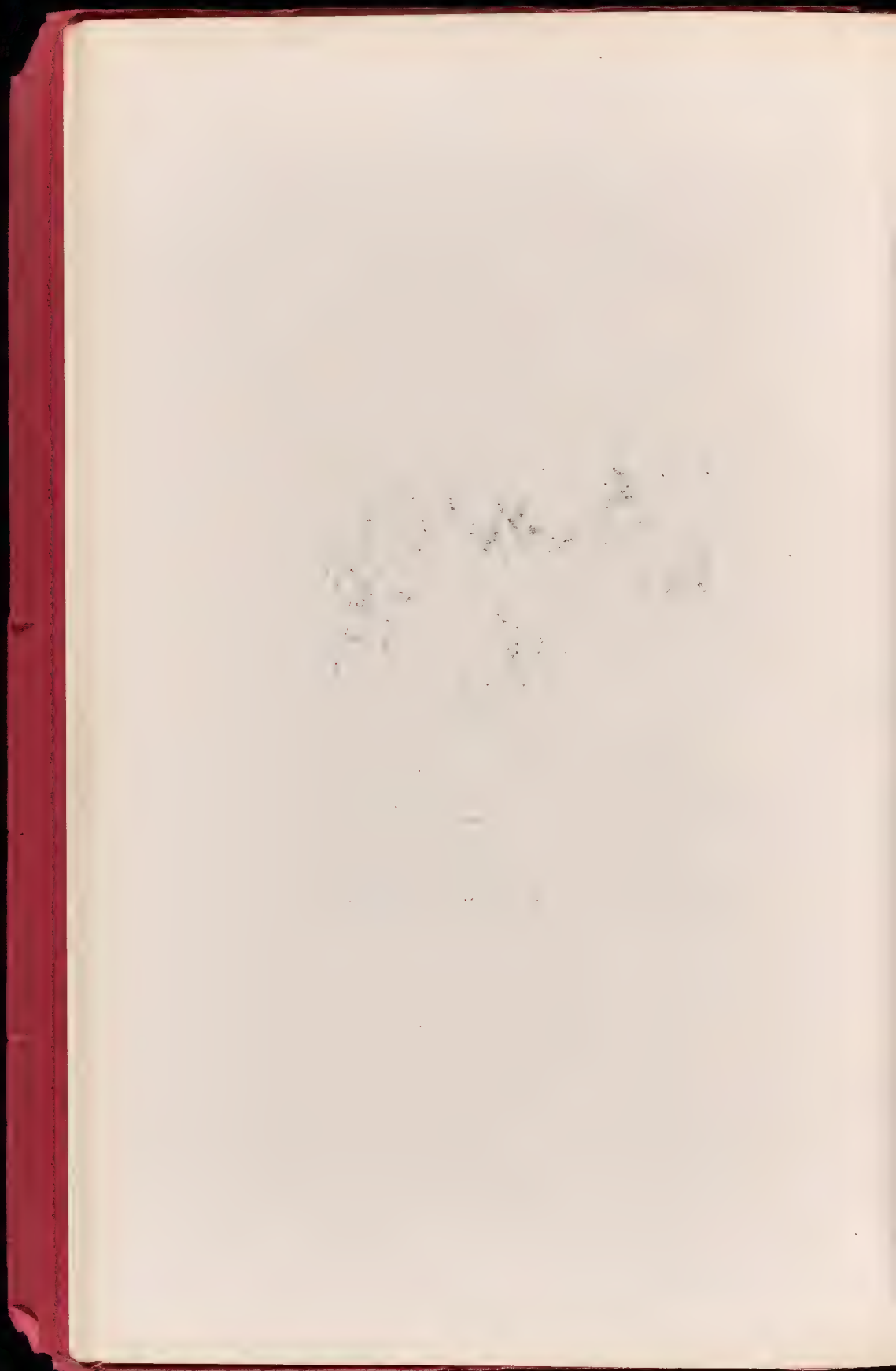


Exter



Udaltzova

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of Suprematism is, precisely, the creative treatment of a flat surface.

Every picture is, evidently, a flat surface, a two-dimensional plane. To attempt to make it what it is not, *i.e.*, a three-dimensional object, is to the Suprematists to do violence to its inherent nature by having recourse to tricks of perspective and chiaroscuro. It was those tricks that had made much of the painting in the past serve as the handmaiden of history, archeology, religion; in fact, it had made painting serve all interests but its own. Suprematism would deliberately exclude all reference to reality both as subject matter (Romanticism, Naturalism, Impressionism) and as point of departure (Primitivism, Cubism, Futurism); it would free painting from all foreign elements and thus enhance the quality of the art medium and attempt, if not attain, the highest—the supreme—purity of plastic expression.

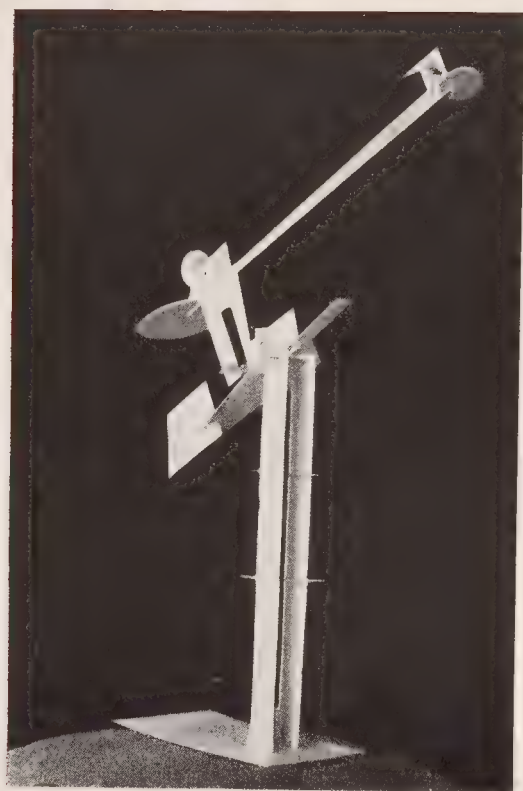
The basic principles of Suprematism are economy in the choice of pictorial means, rhythm in their interrelation, and universality in their appeal. The factors most consonant with these principles are simple elementary geometric forms and pure elementary spectral colors. Simple as these factors are, they yet allow of numberless combinations and the greatest variety—in the rhythm of related planes, in the balance of distributed color masses, in the proportion between full and empty spaces.

Malevitch, the founder, leader and theorist of the movement who passed through Cubism and Futurism himself ("From Cezanne to Suprematism", "New System in Art"), led theorization to a point where rationalism bordered dangerously on mysti-

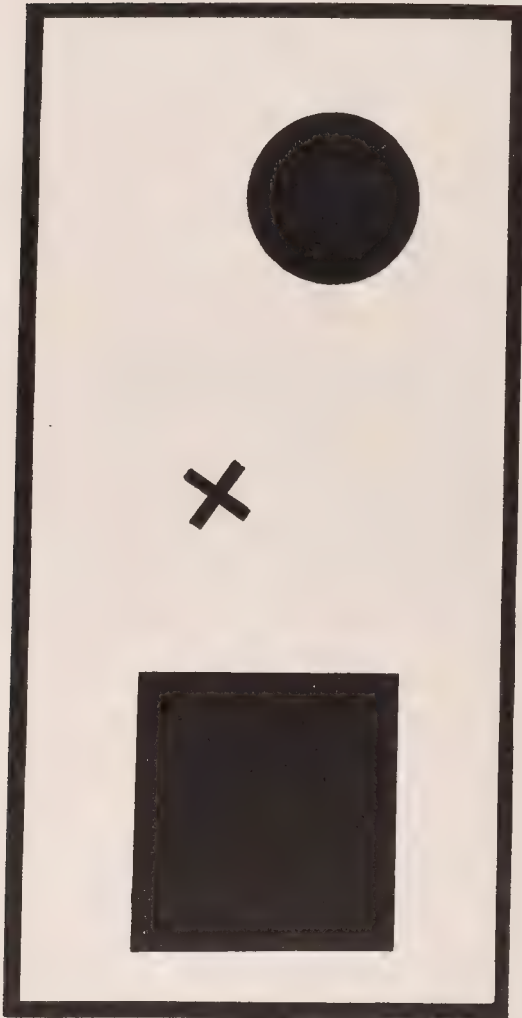
cism. He developed the concept of the prime importance of black, red and white from the standpoint of purity and saturation; perceived in the square the active human principle and in the circle the passive natural principle, etc.

The history of Suprematism was brief but eventful. It was a process of elimination, a constant approach to the "Zero point of art." The first Suprematist pictures show a fairly complex arrangement of form and color. They gradually became more and more simple. At last Malevitch carried simplification so far as to paint a black disk on a white square. His next step was to paint "White on White." To be sure, the two whites differ in hue and texture. Rodtchenko, one of his ablest pupils, painted "Black on Black" (mat and glossy). Then he made the last step by painting three square canvasses in the three elementary colors, red, blue and yellow, respectively. The significance of this is that every artist must be a craftsman; let him learn to cover a flat surface with the same ability that a house or sign painter does and he may then be qualified for earnest work.

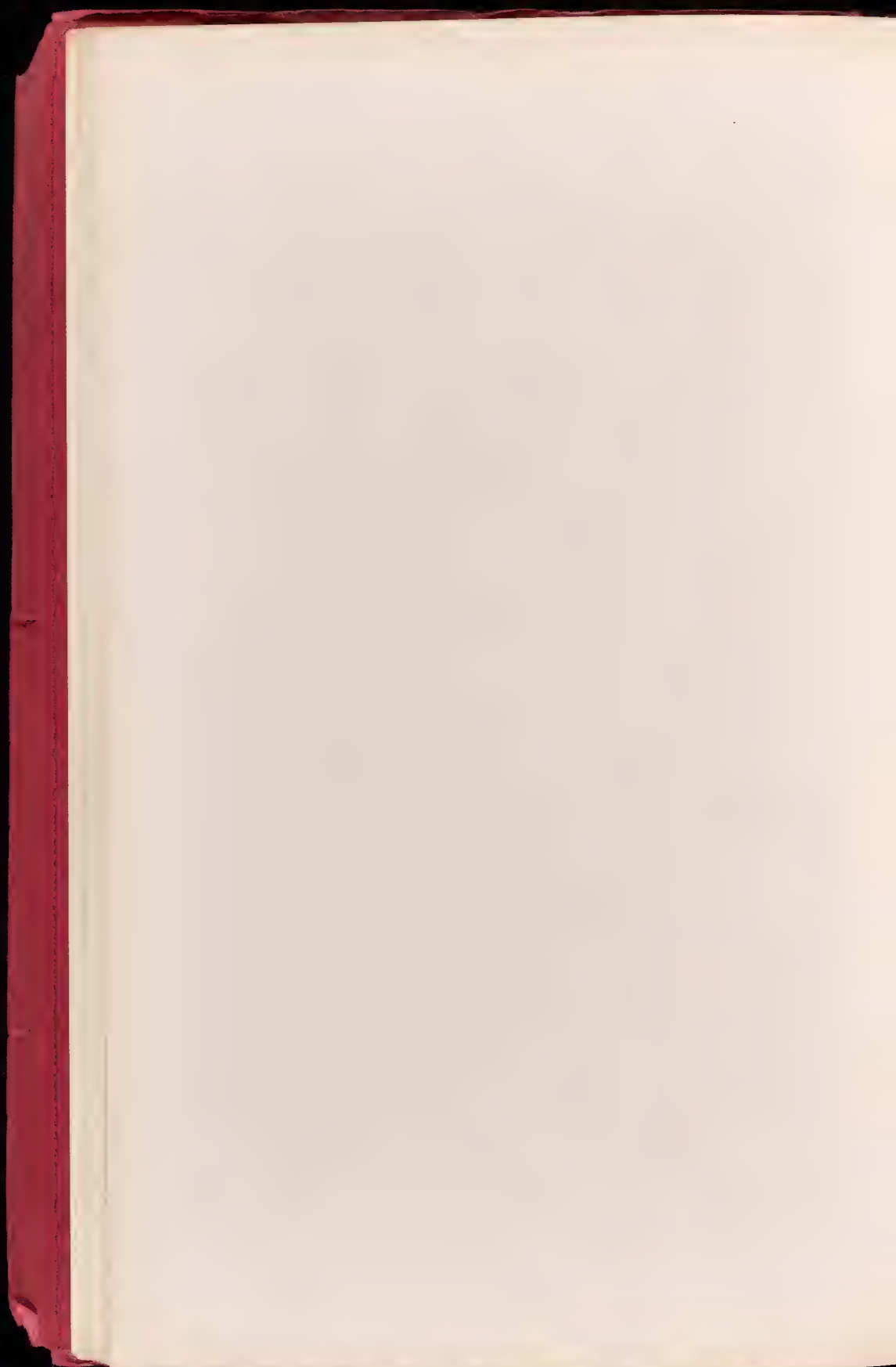
Does that mean that art has at last reached a blind alley? Rodtchenko, who passed from Suprematism to Constructivism, would answer in the positive. There is, however, a passage into the open. It is the passage leading from art to production. Art should merge with life. Autonomous art has no longer any important function to perform. But the artist has. He should devote his organizing, creative faculties to the productive industrial processes and thus abandon his parasitic existence. Rodtchenko was true to his doctrine: he gave up the practice of art.



Rodtchenko



Malevitch



THE CONSTRUCTIVISTS

Not at once, however. At first he engaged in numerous experimental tests, made some model experimental three-dimensional constructions, purporting thus to perfect the study of volume, plane, and materials, the latter with a view to their physical properties and potential functional use. Then Rodtchenko passed to production. Ultimately the Constructivist will have a field of activity wide enough to include city planning and building. For the moment he must perforce confine himself to more modest tasks. In the case of Rodtchenko these took the form of several types of animated inscriptions for the state cinema "Kino-Pravda", new book-covers and other similar things of a practical nature. In all—the aim is the most economical and practical utilization of space and text. As instructor in The State Art and Technical Institute, Rodtchenko gives his pupils such problems as the following: Construct a worker's bed that might also serve as a chair and a table.

The Constructivist doctrine is, perhaps, the most typical of the Revolution. The school is distinguished by the gifted artists in its ranks—Tatlin, Lissitzky, Rodtchenko, Medunetzky, Popova, Altman, Ioganson, Mituritch, Gabo, Pevsner, Varst, Kliun, Kliutzis, G. and V. Stenberg, Tchaikov—and the host of theorists who support it—Punin, Arvatov, Brick, Aksionov, Gan, Ehrenbourg, Tarabukin. Not all Constructivists are in agreement. While some of them would abandon art for production, others grant the legitimacy of artistic activity but would transform it in harmony with the new age. Art should

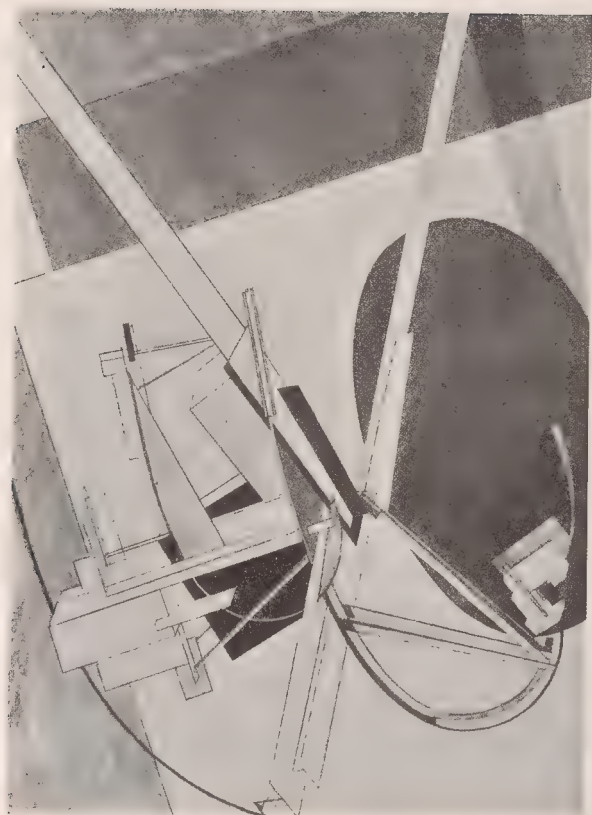
have its roots in the weightiest realities of our day. These are science and industry. The Constructivists, therefore, go for instruction to science and borrow an example from industry. Like science, they aim at precision, order, organization; like industry, they deal with concrete materials: paper, wood, coal, iron, glass. Out of these, new objects—not pictures—are created, not imitative of reality, but built with a structural logic to be utilized eventually, just as steam was utilized long after its discovery—new objects born of a social effort and turned to social ends. Hence the Constructivists consider their work strictly utilitarian. Technical processes organize dead materials; constructivist art would mould the new social personality.

The work of Lissitzky is of an austere simplicity. He is very sparing in his means. In his "Pro-uns" (Projects of the New Art), geometric form treated frequently in conventional lighting and foreshortening, is arranged in subtle balance. Using black, gray and white with a dash of color here and there, he sometimes introduces tinfoil, cardboard or other material to cement the whole.

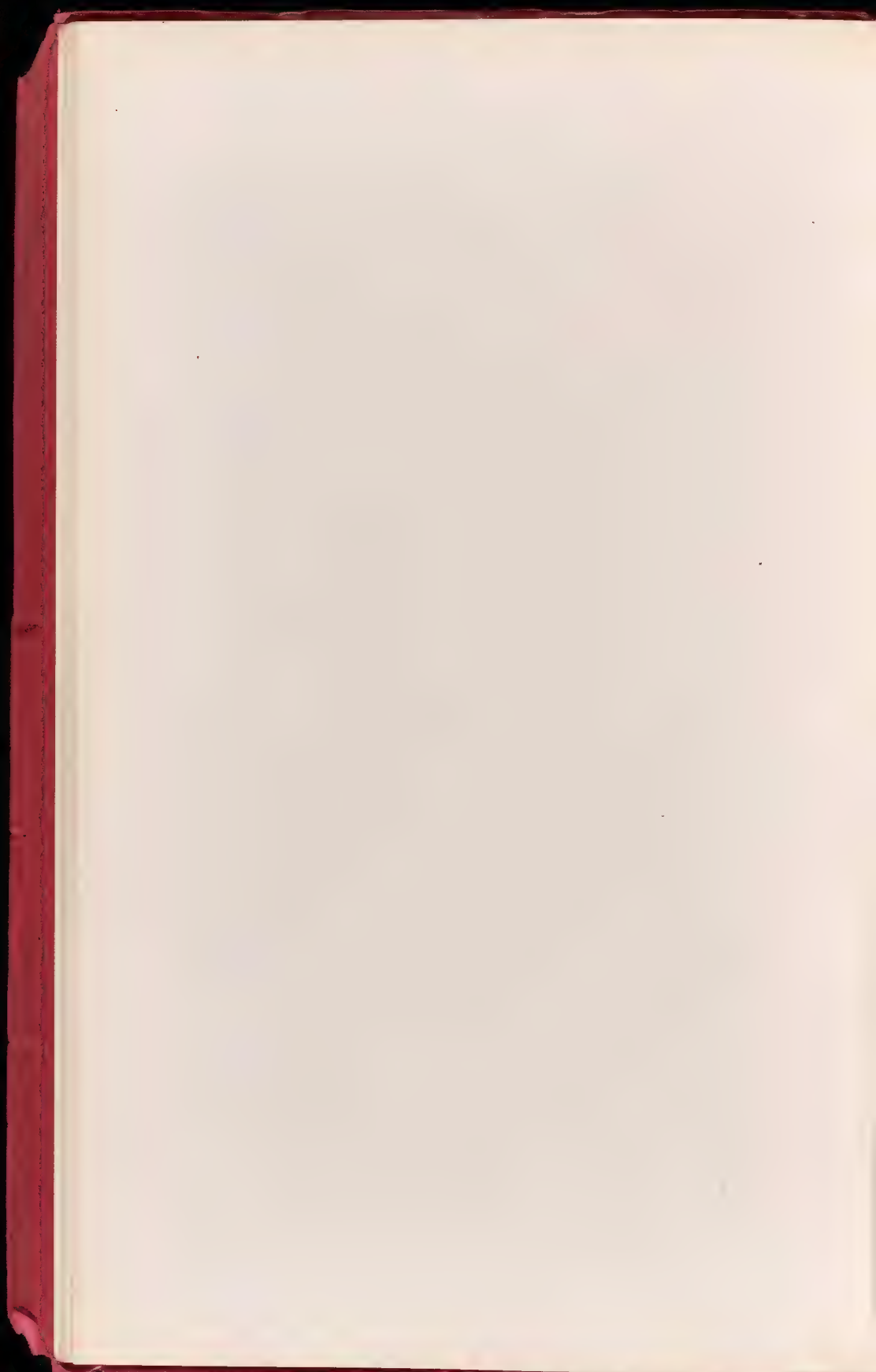
Objectivity is one of the cardinal articles of his credo. Art is not a matter of inspiration or intuition but of logic and craftsmanship. The function of art, before it disappears, is not to decorate or beautify life but to transform and organize it. The artist must change from one who represents existing objects into one who creates a world of new objects. He must communicate to his work the spirit of constructiveness and organization reigning in the life about him. This does not mean that he is to copy



Rosanova



Lissitzky



the machine. He is to emulate the spirit that guides the construction of it; he is to build his own work with the same precision of clearly defined form, with the same order in the mathematical relation of parts, with the same economy in the choice of means and the nice adjustment of structure to function. The social value of such an art, the artist maintains, is for the present to serve as a discipline for organizing group consciousness; to help find the point of contact between art and industry before life itself becomes an art. I. Ehrenbourg, a brilliant Russian writer and ardent supporter of the Constructivist credo, attaches even greater importance to these new, invented forms. They may at some future date find actual practical application. This ingenious assumption has at least one point in its favor: it cannot be disproved.

N. Altman seeks to emphasize both the social and the formal aspects in his art. This artist has passed through all stages in the evolution from the "World of Art" to the latest tendencies. He gained prominence as a portrait painter, notably through his portrait of Anna Achmatova. He had a semi-Cubist period, did Constructivist theatrical decoration, engaged in staging revolutionary festivals and finally came to his abstract constructions in materials. He now holds that the new art of the Cubists and the Futurists, as well as the old art of the "Wanderers" and the "World of Art," is reactionary and out of date. The new age requires a new departure. Two ways are open to modern artists. The first is to abandon art and to pass into production, as Rodtchenko did; the second is to create a new art based not on merely visual forms, planes, lines, colors, but an art

whose component elements are real concrete materials: coal, iron, wood, paper. The artist must make a very careful and thorough study of his materials before using them. One of Altman's studies, for instance, is called "Varnish." The aim has been to find the form which might render most adequately the viscosity of varnish. Another study is entitled "Coal." While his works, "objects" not pictures, are as abstract as the paintings of Kandinsky or Malevitch, their social and esthetic significance, it is claimed, is entirely different. Whereas the latter embody purely individual contemplation and make their chief appeal to vision, Altman's embody a social ideal and serve to organize the social consciousness conformably with that ideal. The work that well illustrates this theory is "Russia." It is a rectangular board varnished and polished in some parts and inlaid with coal, paper, ebony in others. The work purports to affect human consciousness by revealing to it in abstract form the powerful reality of the Revolution and its glorification of labor.

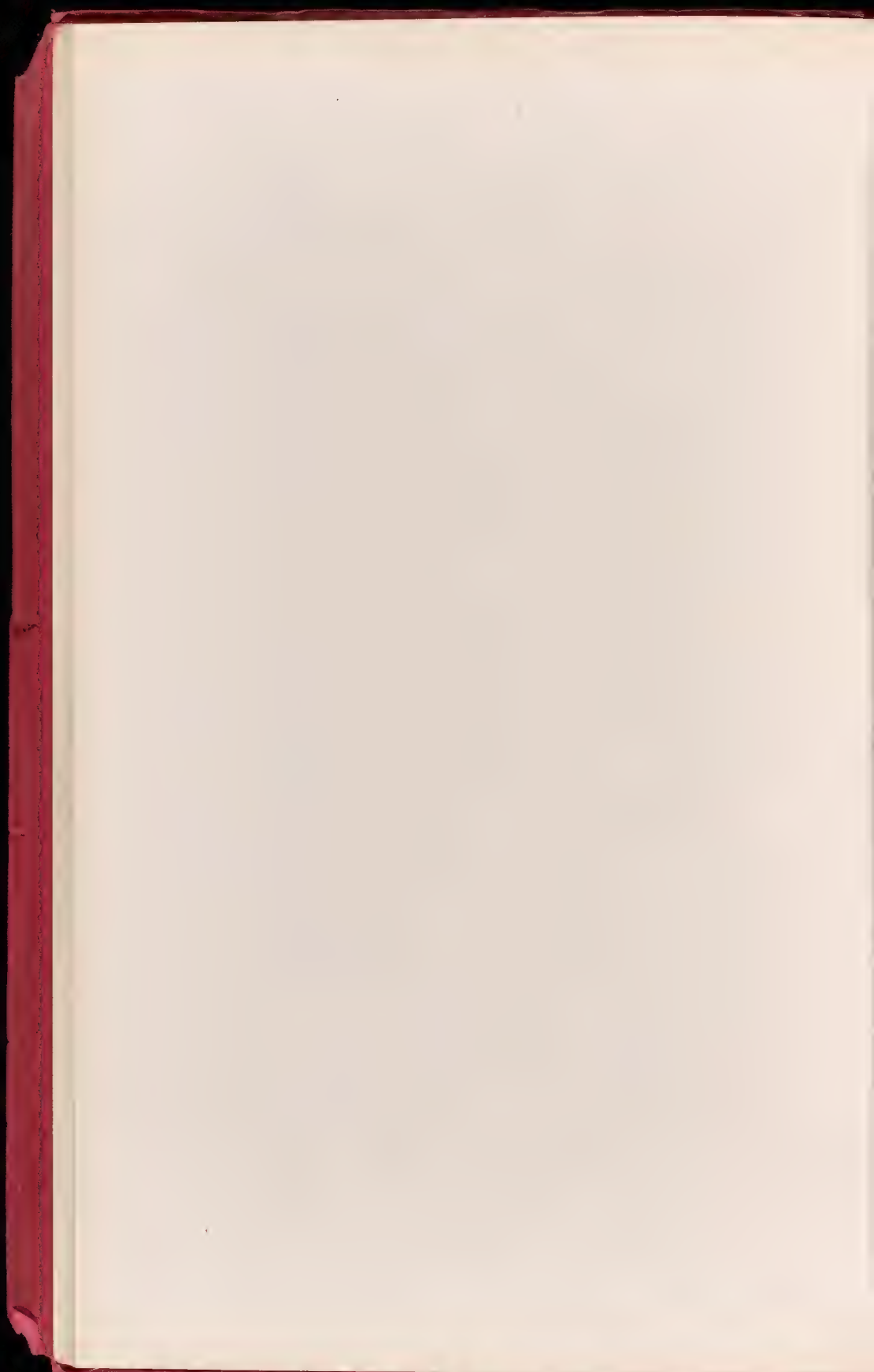
Tatlin is perhaps the most daring experimenter and innovator among the Constructivists. He is the inventor of "Counter-relief"—relief set against relief and volume massed upon volume at angles nicely adjusted to show the contrast of materials and the relation of full and empty spaces. This "Counter-relief" seeks to surpass everything heretofore attempted in art. Like Altman, Tatlin deals with concrete materials (he began much earlier), but whereas Altman's "objects" are on a surface, Tatlin's "Counter-reliefs" are in the round. Every material—wood, stone, marble, iron, paper—has its own properties and



Altman



Tatlin



functions, its own individuality, one might say, and, therefore, must also suggest the form into which it might be embodied. Wood and glass, for example, cannot be used interchangeably for the same form without lessening the quality of the work. The material must suggest the form, the form must be relevant to the material. Thus only will the artist give the sensation and reveal the essence of reality more profoundly than any eye-deceiving simulacra, which in truth deceive no one. Thus only does the work of art become a new creation, as new and as real in the hand of the artist as a complicated tool is in the hand of the mechanic. It is a new organism placed in real space, of vaster significance, surely, than naturalist, impressionist or cubist space, and made of real materials affording, certainly, greater variety of expression than mere color in any of its esthetic functions. Thus alone will the artist susceptible to the spirit of his day be able to discover the specific form that would give adequate expression to that spirit

Tatlin's most ambitious attempt was his "Monument to the Third International," planned to house various Soviet institutions. The monument purported to embody creative and utilitarian aims and to synthesize art and science. It was to be built in the form of a huge iron spiral leaning at an angle of 45 degrees, measuring 400 meters in height and enclosing three stories, all made of glass. These stories, in the form of cube, pyramid and cylinder, were to rotate at the velocities of a year, a month and a day, respectively. No attempt has ever been made to erect the monument. In fact, opponents of Con-

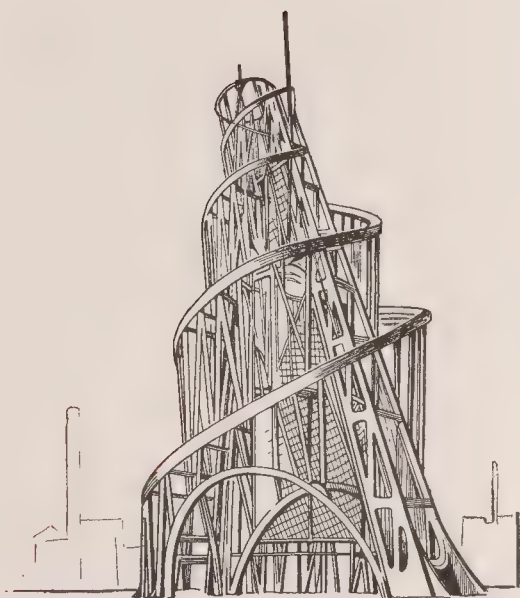
structivism maintained that its erection was an engineering feat beyond possibility. In any case, only photographs of it remain. The model, about 25 meters high, was destroyed about two years ago, apparently because it was taking up too much space.

In different connection and on a smaller scale, the sculptor Gabo also introduces dynamism into his work. He seeks to establish in his sculpture an interrelation of forces rather than of masses. Gabo operates, like Archipenko, with the concave instead of the convex surface common in sculpture and attempts to solve his novel problems in constructions in glass.

Archipenko, who has been away from Russia over 15 years, was one of the first to employ Cubist and Constructivist principles in his work. He holds high rank among modern Russian artists for his structural sculpture, his sculpto-painting, his work in porcelain and metal and his excellent drawings.

The sculptors Lipschitz and Zadkin, who have likewise some points in common with the Russian Cubists and Constructivists, have also developed independently abroad, where they won fame as artists of the first magnitude.

There are still other versions of the Constructivist doctrine, all of them having at their core what one might call irreverently, a romantic adoration of the machine—machines are still comparatively rare in Russia. The law of contrast. It was in the classical land of Political Economy, the Industrial Revolution, and urban centralization—it was in England that landscape painting had its rise.

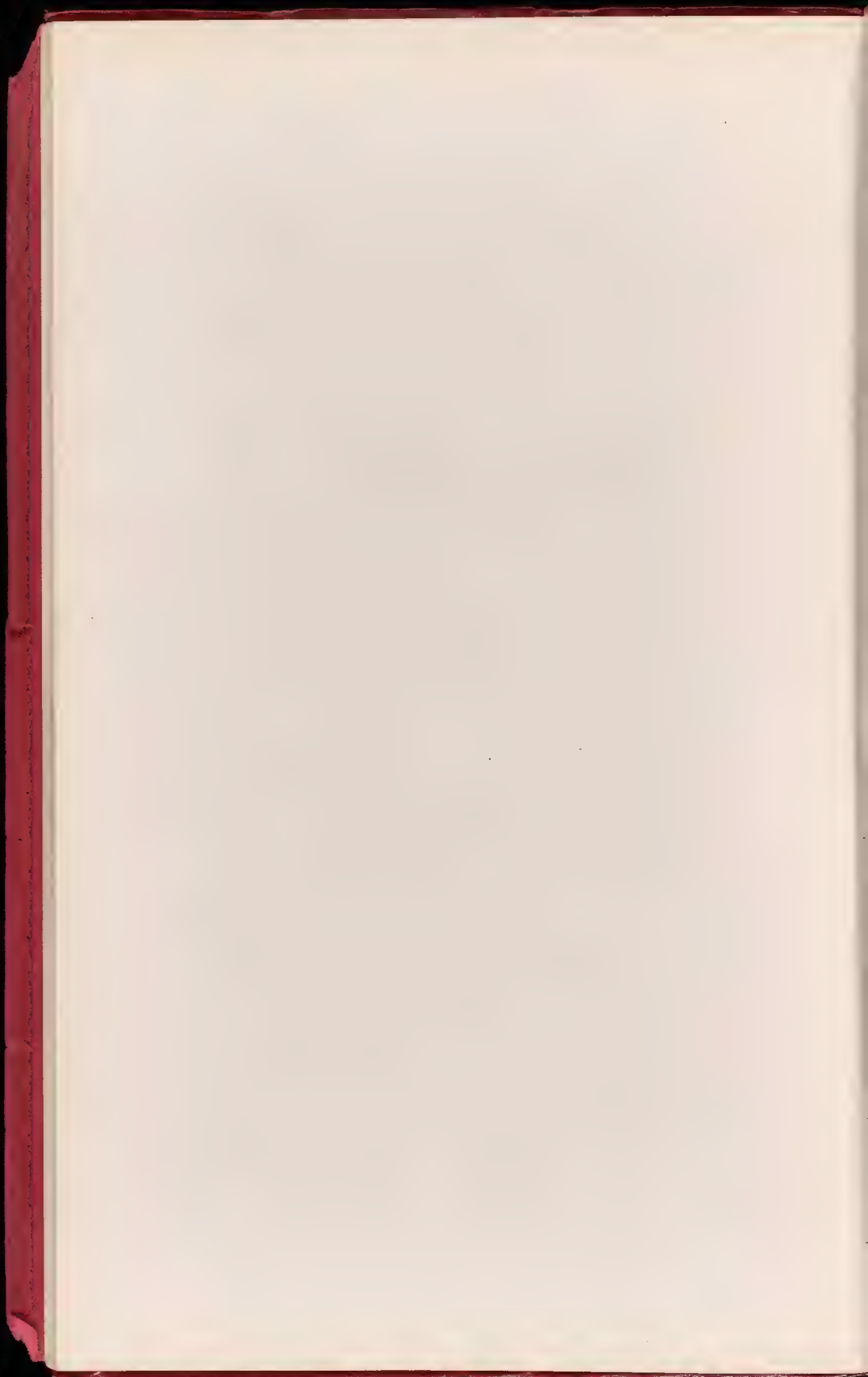


Tatlin



Gabo

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THE EXPRESSIONIST STRAIN

In contrast to the intellectualism and materialism of the regnant Russian schools is the spiritual, intuitive, and introspective work of Kandinsky, Chagall, Burliuk and Filonov. They may be all termed Expressionists, for their intricate design, inchoate fantasy and subjective symbolism indicate kinship with the German school of the same name.

Kandinsky is one of the forbears of abstract art in general and of German Expressionism in particular. Art according to him ("The Spiritual Element in Art," "Autobiography") is a blending of the inner element, the artist's emotion, and the outer element, the material medium of expression. Originally art is utilitarian; it serves definite useful purposes. It gradually separates from its practical associations, undergoes a process of spiritualization and becomes pure esthetic expression. It reaches finally the stage of Compositional painting, of which Kandinsky himself is an exponent. Kandinsky began with pictures in Russian national style, passed through semi-abstract Impressions (nature still as point of departure) to Improvisations and Compositions—abstract decorative paintings of moods, for which he is mainly famous. Lately he has shown a tendency toward geometrization, the evident use of compass and ruler, probably under the influence of the modern Russians.

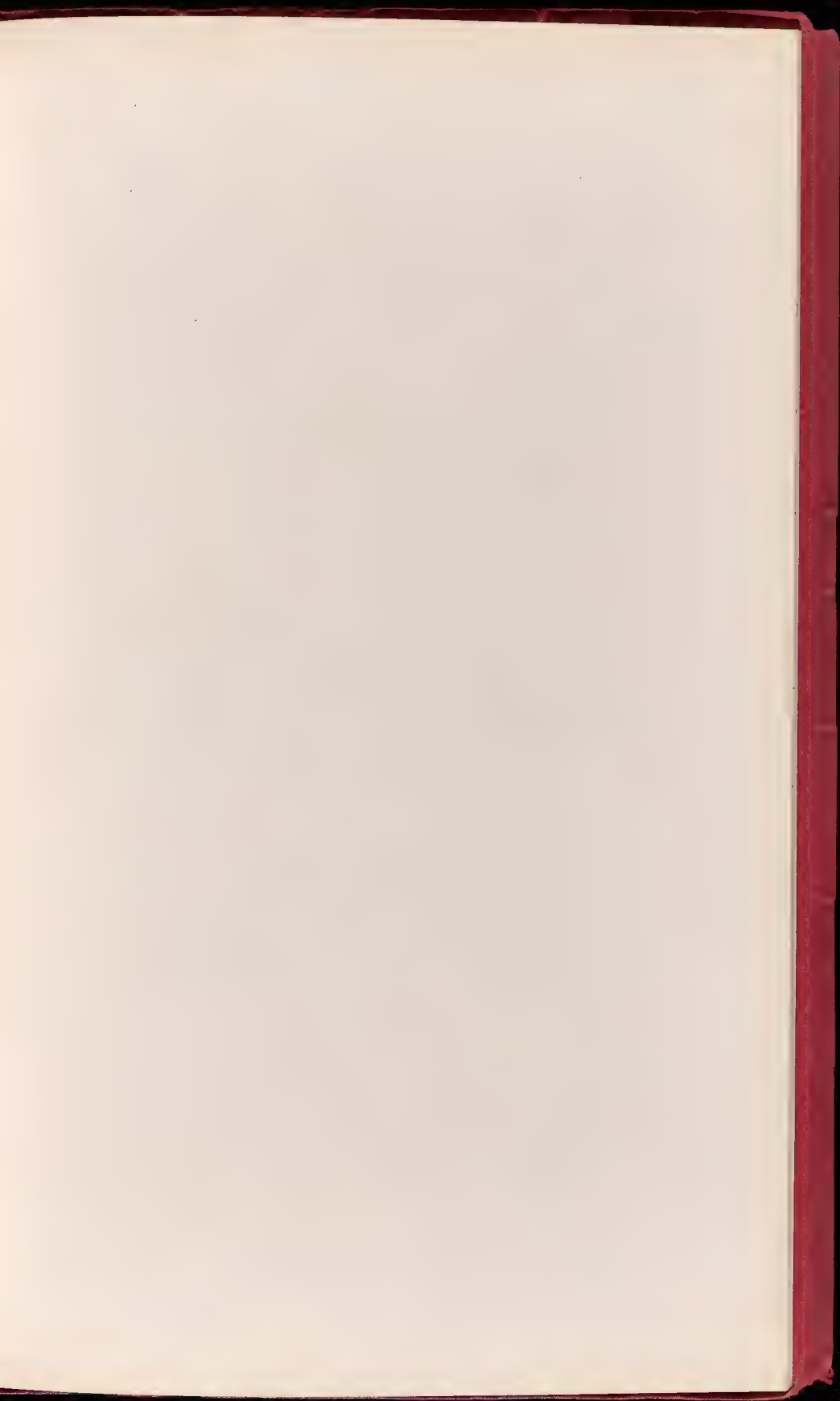
Chagall is a superb story-teller; always entertaining, if not always clear. Deep-rooted in the soil of his native Vitebsk, scenes and people of which figure so prominently in his work, he is sufficiently bold to demolish houses and dissect people as his fancy pleases him. Awake to the influence of Paris, where

he passed his apprenticeship, he is sufficiently independent to discard modernist practices whenever his aims require it and to utilize them whenever they serve his ends. As radical at times, in his departure from fidelity to natural appearance, as the Cubists, his aim is never pure abstraction; it is always greater concreteness reached by elimination, transposition, or deformation of detail. A rich gamut of color, a fertile imagination, exquisite detail, and a keen sense of humor are factors with which he achieves magnificent results.

David Burliuk did heroic pioneer service for modern Russian art. He published and edited numerous modernist tracts, preached the modernist gospel from the rostrum in city after city, and, equally facile with pen and brush, turned out scores of pictures and articles.

His first works are simple in statement and broad in manner; he began with a vigorous campaign for a return to the Russian Primitives. Later one notices, along with numerous other modernist practices, the frequent use of the Futurist method of dissociation of motion ("The Wood Cutter"). Burliuk's most typical works, however, are in the Expressionist strain ("The Angel of Peace Who Came too Late"), varied in their formal treatment, but all characterized by a complex symbolism of social, psychologic and even pathologic significance. Burliuk has successfully exhibited abroad in Germany, Japan and the United States.

The work of Filonov reveals a sensibility poignantly alert to every vibration of the surrounding world which the mind of the artist refracts as a tor-

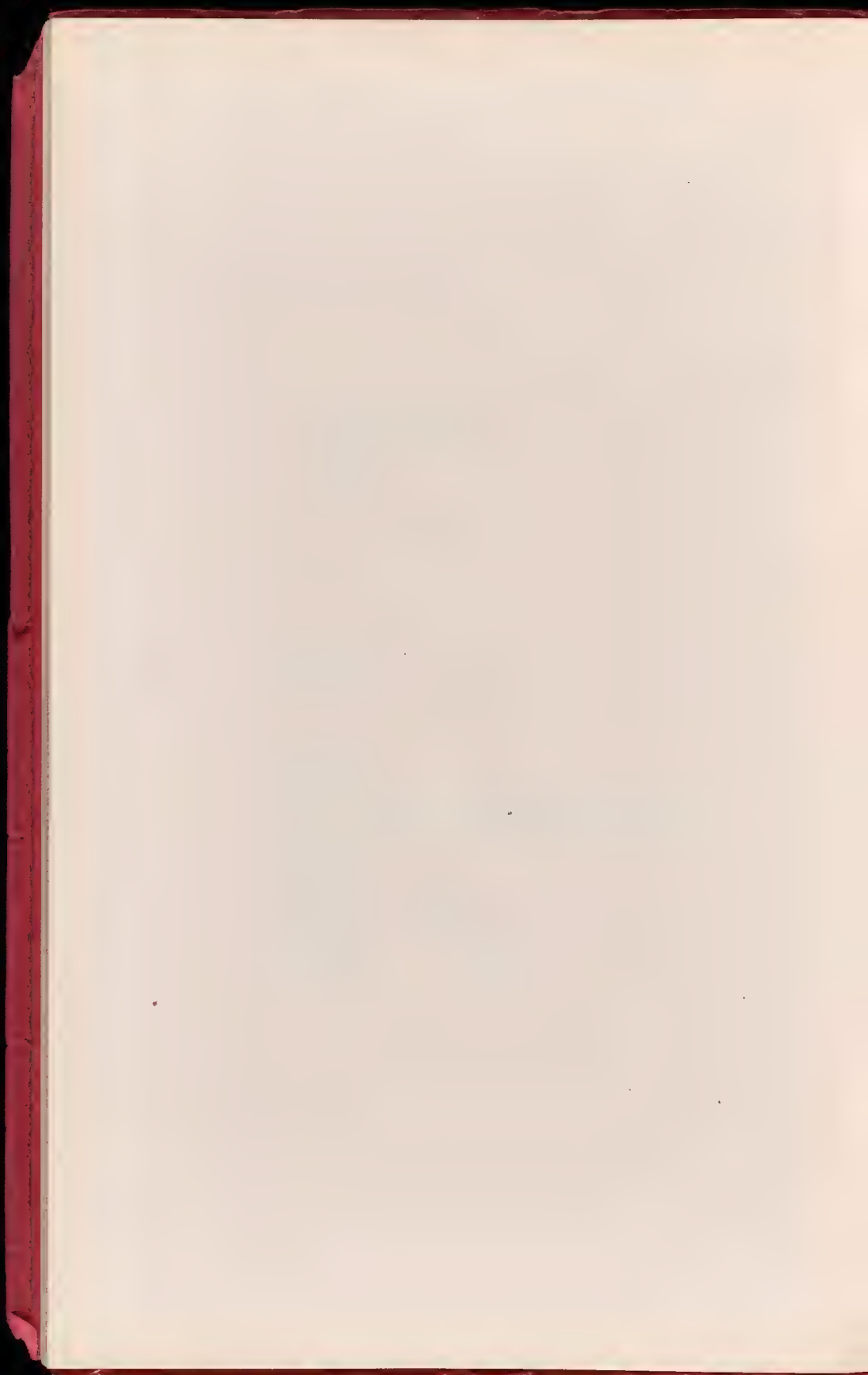




Kandinsky



Chagall



mented cataclysm. His weird visions stand strangely apart from everything known in Russian art.

Filonov himself defines his relation to the art world by some startling generalizations. The overwhelming mass of art, past and present, (including Futurism, Cubism, Constructivism, etc.) suffers from the Realist fallacy. Realism, in Filonov's interpretation, postulates two predicates in the sphere of its activity: form and color. Thereby it leaves most of what is essential in nature unexplored and indeed undivined.

To this conception Filonov opposes his own "Scientific, analytic, intuitive naturalism" which would render permanent, not form and color alone but "a whole world of phenomena, visible and invisible . . . emanations, reactions . . . geneses, existences . . . processes, pulsations. . . ." In this manner, art would come into a new florescence and acquire universal import and significance.



OTHERS

There are still other artists, such as Lapshin, Bruni, Rossine, Pevzner, Sinezubov, Matiushin, somewhat aside from the general trend though each a well-defined personality often supported by an elaborate theory.

Sternberg was among the most active in official art circles, reorganizing art schools, arranging exhibitions, editing publications, etc. He is therefore in general not indifferent to social theory. Nevertheless, in his work he confines himself to pure

esthetic expression which he seeks to achieve by a simplification and conventionalization of natural form and by color and texture contrasts.

Puni, who is highly endowed both as artist and as critic, passed the Cubist and Suprematist stages and has now entered on a new phase typical of much of modern European art (Metzinger, Survage, Severini, Carrà, Picasso). Representation is an important element in all his newest work. The danger of degenerating into mere geometric ornamentation, which is sometimes a result of complete abstraction, seems thus avoided, while representation is always subordinated to pictorial considerations. Some of Puni's finest works are of this latest period.

This tendency away from the abstract has even found organized expression. Two new art groups, "The New Society of Painters" (*Noj*), and "The Society of Easel Painters" (*Ost*), both heralded by the inevitable manifestos, are at one in repudiating non-representative painting, in reinstating the easel picture in the place of honor and in asserting the importance of the contemporary theme in art.



ART CRITICISM

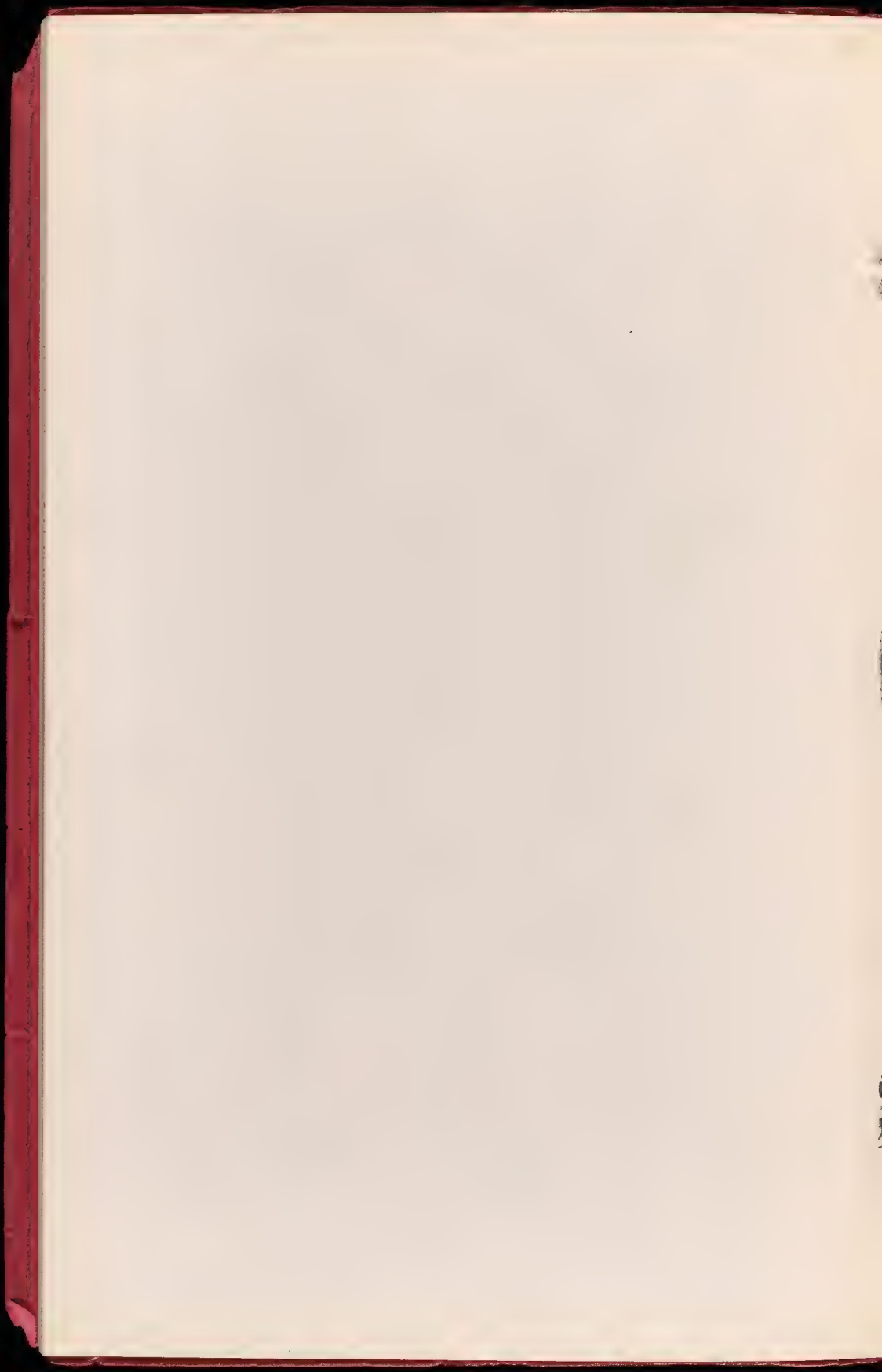
Critical literature is as ever abundant. At times the modern critics are somewhat hasty in their positive generalizations; at times they like to play the part of Apollinaire and explain the artists to themselves. On the whole, however, there is a healthy tendency to examine fearlessly and searchingly all standards.



Burliuk



Filonov



Punin would have art train the apperceptive and cognitive faculties, to make man perceive the world as synthesis and thereby become master of it. Arvator would have art become ancillary to life, organize the human emotions and intellect, make them receptive to progressive revolutionary processes, and be finally distilled in life and absorbed by it. Brick would raise the artist to the rank of artisan and thus make him a useful member of society. ("He who does not work, neither shall he eat.") Gan would banish art from society altogether ("We declare irreconcilable war on art"), and decree "material-intellectual production," the creation of socially necessary objects of use.

To one acquainted with Russian critical literature much of this sounds familiar. Pissarev, over half a century ago, drew a parallel between Shakespeare and a shoemaker much to the disadvantage of the former. ("A pair of boots is more important than Shakespeare.") Stasov advocated an art of social utility. Tolstoy's doctrine of artistic "infection" is universally familiar. Even the case of Rodtchenko finds its analogy in that of Gue, who after a successful artistic career abandoned art under the influence of Tolstoy's evangelical doctrines.

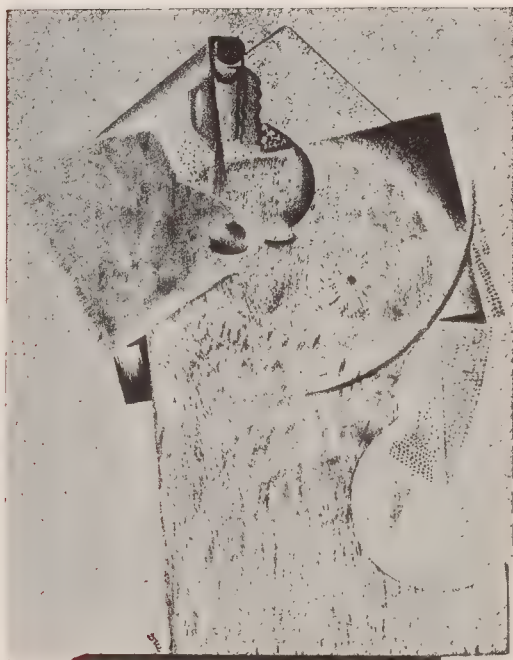


PRESENT STATUS

In general, however, the modern Russian critics are much bolder in their theorization owing to their more radical social philosophy and their leaning on the State. The Soviet Government acted on the assumption that a new art can be the work of a new

man, himself the product of a new social system. Their policy was based on this assumption and they attempted to solve the art problem in a practical way—perhaps in the only practical way possible—in the way implicit in the assumption.

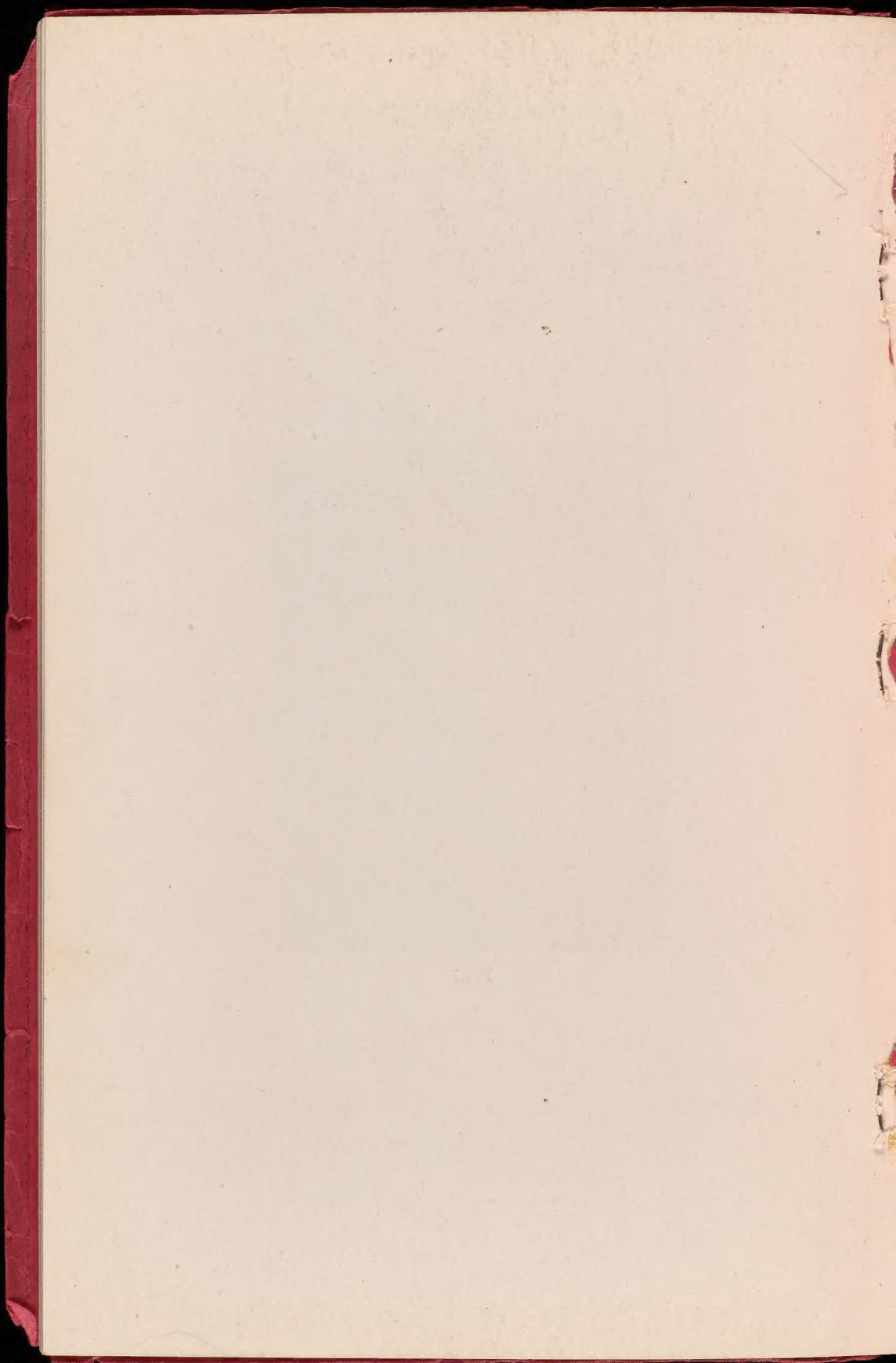
The attempt, however worth making, was not crowned with immediate success. External and internal complications led to the inauguration of the New Economic Policy (*Nep*), restoring to private property and initiative certain of its former privileges. Private art patrons and buyers of the old stamp have appeared again. There is a growing demand for portraits, landscapes and genre pictures. The demand is met by the older schools, which are reorganizing their semi-defunct groupings, arranging exhibitions and becoming in general assertive. All this had a decided effect on the radical artists, for though the Soviets still aid art and artists in various ways, by supporting galleries, schools, theatres, publications, such aid is of necessity more limited than formerly. Compelled to shift for themselves the less resolute among the radicals have either turned to other fields or have gone abroad to join the modernists' ranks in Berlin, Paris, Prague. Not a few, however, are still at their posts, certain that the present crisis in art is only temporary; that it is destined to be liquidated, and that the result consequent upon this eventuality will be far more fruitful than the most hopeful venture to prophesy.



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